AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-19. **(CANCELED)**

20. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic inner support,

b. at least one outer reinforcement material having an open structure~~, the outer reinforcement material having a metallic connection to the inner support~~;

c. an overlay layer provided on the outer reinforcement material, wherein the overlay contains polyethylene;

d. a metallic connection between the outer reinforcement material and the inner support, the metallic connection being defined as an intermediate metallic layer galvanized and/or plated between the inner support and the outer reinforcement material.

21. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains at least one of:

a. high-molecular polyethylene,

b. ultrahigh-molecular polyethylene, and/or

c. polyethylene compounds.

22. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the material of the overlay layer at least partly fills the openings of the outer reinforcement material.

23. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer, as measured above the outer reinforcement material, has a thickness of 5 μm to 1.5 mm

24. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer, as measured above the outer reinforcement material, has a thickness of 100 to 300 μm.

25. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support and the outer reinforcement material are connected to each other by at least one of:

a. a sintered connection,

b. a welded connection,

c. a soldered connection, and/or

d. a galvanized connection.

26. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support is formed of at least one of steel, stainless steel, aluminum, bronze, brass, titanium and/or copper.

27. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support has a thickness of 0.05 to 10 mm.

28. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support has a thickness of 0.2 to 3 mm.

29. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is a metal fabric.

30. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is formed of at least one of:

a. wire mesh,

b. expanded metal fabric,

c. metal fleece,

d. metal foam, and/or

e. a perforated metal plate.

31. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is formed of at least one of bronze, copper, chrome, nickel, zinc, iron, and/or aluminum.

32. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material has a thickness of 0.1 to 6 mm.

33. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material has a thickness of 0.2 to 2 mm.

34. **(CANCELED)**

35. **(CANCELED)**

36. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The composite material of ~~claim 34~~ claim 20 wherein the intermediate metallic layer is formed of at least one of bronze, copper, chrome, nickel, zinc, iron, and/or aluminum.

37. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The composite material of ~~claim 34~~ claim 20 wherein the intermediate metallic layer has a thickness of 1 to 100 μm.

38. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer is calandered, painted, and/or laminated into the outer reinforcement material.

39. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 formed into a sliding bearing wherein the overlay layer and/or the outer reinforcement material form the outer sliding surface of the sliding bearing.

40. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains less than 10% polytetrafluouroethylene.

41. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 40 wherein the overlay layer contains no polytetrafluouroethylene.

42. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 40 wherein the overlay layer contains no fillers formed predominantly of calcium.

43. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains no calcium carbonate.

44. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains no calcium carbonate.

45. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein:
    a. the outer reinforcement material includes a wire mesh, and
    b. the overlay layer contains less than 10% polytetrafluouroethylene.

46. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 45 wherein the wire mesh contains bronze.

47. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The composite material of claim 46 wherein the overlay layer contains no fillers formed predominantly of calcium.

48. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic substrate,

b. an outer layer of porous metallic reinforcement material, the outer layer having connections to the metallic substrate across the surface of the metallic substrate,

c. **a smooth intermediate metallic connecting layer galvanized and/or plated between the substrate and the outer layer, and**

d. an overlay layer situated in the pores of the outer layer, wherein the overlay layer contains polyethylene,

wherein the outer layer and/or the overlay layer define the outer surface of a bearing.

49. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic substrate having an outer surface,

b. a reinforcing layer of metallic material having:

i. an inner surface facing the outer surface of the metallic substrate, and

ii. an opposing outer surface which at least partially defines the outer bearing surface of a sliding structure,

wherein:

(1) the inner surface of the reinforcing layer is metallically connected to the outer surface of the substrate along at least numerous locations of the outer surface of the substrate,

(2) voids are defined within a substantial portion of the reinforcing layer, and

(3) the voids contain polyethylene; and

c. **an intermediate metallic connecting layer having:**

(1) **an inner surface joined to the outer surface of the substrate, and**

(2) **a smooth outer surface joined to the inner surface of the reinforcing layer.**

50. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 49 wherein the intermediate metallic connecting layer is galvanized and/or plated to the outer surface of the substrate.